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Time

Time&Life Building, Rockefeller Center
New York, N.Y. 10020

To the editor:

I am writing with respect to your November 28, 1988 issue which featured an article by James Reston Jr. entitled, "Was Connally the Real Target?". Let me begin by stating unequivocally that I believe Mr. Reston is a fraud. I say this not only because Mr. Reston ignores the responsible criticism of the Warren Report which casts considerable doubt on the conclusion that Oswald shot at anybody that day, but also because of some of the evidence he cites. For example, he cites the testimony of George Bouhe regarding Oswald's animosity toward Connally (p.32). In doing so he edits the actual testimony without indication and thus completely misrepresents what George Bouhe actually said to the Warren Commission. Compare the following from the printed evidence (Hearings and Exhibits of the Warren Commission vol. 8 p.374) with what appears on p.32 of Time:

Mr. LIEBELER. Did he ever express any hostilities toward any individual in the Government?

Mr. BOUHE. Never heard. And I must emphasize again that to talk politics with a man like that, I would find totally hopeless and useless. I never did it. But if anybody asked me, did he have any hostility against anybody in the Government, which I didn't hear myself, I would say Governor Connally.

Mr. LIEBELER. Why do you say that?

Mr. BOUHE. Because, where, I can't find the paper, but when he was in Minsk, he wrote a letter. I have it some place, but I don't know where, in the paper here.

Mr. LIEBELER. Let me ask you this, Mr. Bouhe. Did Oswald tell you that he wrote a letter to Governor Connally?

Mr. BOUHE. No, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. You learned that only after reading it in the paper?

Mr. BOUHE. Absolutely. No correspondence. We didn't discuss. I would say my conversations with Oswald were at rock bottom minimum.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did you have any feeling before the assassination that he had any hostility toward any individual in the Government?

Mr. BOUHE. You mean as of the end of December, 1962?

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes.

Mr. BOUHE. I did not hear him say anything like that. But in reading this press news after the assassination, it clearly describes there the letter which he wrote from Minsk to Governor Connally, who was at the time Secretary of the Navy, and told him that he wants to correct the injustice being done an ex-serviceman and citizen, and I almost see the period "as soon as possible."

Connally passed it to the Marine Corps, according to the paper, which did nothing about it. And then I think it was the Newsweek magazine story which said, quoting Oswald, "Well, I will leave nothing undone to correct this injustice." That is what I know from the press. To me, I would say that it looks like a threat.

Mr. LIEBELER. But you don't have any knowledge of Oswald's displeasure with Governor Connally?

Mr. BOUHE. Absolutely not.

Mr. Reston's account of the testimony of Alexandra De Mohrenschildt also conflicts with the record. I am including her actual testimony (at the time she gave it she was Mrs. Donald Gibson, and previously had been married to Gary Taylor). This appears in the Hearings and Exhibits, vol.11, p. 145:

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Mr. JENNER. Was President Kennedy ever mentioned in the course of the discussions between your husband and Lee?
Mrs. GIBSON. Never, never. He wasn't President at the time anyway, was he?
Mr. JENNER. Yes; he was.
Mrs. GIBSON. Yes; he was. He had just become President, hadn't he? No, he was never mentioned. Now, the only person ever mentioned pertaining to that was the Governor of Texas.
Mr. JENNER. He became President in 1960.
Mrs. GIBSON. It was the Governor of Texas who was mentioned mostly.
Mr. JENNER. Tell us about that.
Mrs. GIBSON. First you are going to have to tell me who the Governor was.
Mr. JENNER. Connally.
Mrs. GIBSON. Connally. Wasn't that the one that—
Mr. JENNER. That had been Secretary of the Navy.
Mrs. GIBSON. That had been Secretary of the Navy, was it? Well, for some reason Lee just didn't like him. I don't know why, but he didn't like him.
Mr. JENNER. Would this refresh your recollection, that the subject of Governor Connally arose in connection with something about Lee's discharge from the Marines?
Mrs. GIBSON. I don't recall. I just know Lee never spoke too much about why he left the Marines or anything like that. I don't know. Maybe it was a dishonorable discharge, I don't know. All I know is that it was something he didn't talk about. And there was a reason why he did not like Connally.
Mr. JENNER. Whatever the reason was, he didn't articulate the reason particularly?
Mrs. GIBSON. No; he just didn't like him.
Mr. JENNER. But you have the definite impression he had an aversion to Governor Connally?
Mrs. GIBSON. Yes; but he never ever said a word about Kennedy.
Mr. JENNER. Did you answer?
Mrs. GIBSON. Yes; I did; yes.
Mr. JENNER. Your answer is yes?
Mrs. GIBSON. Yes.
Mr. JENNER. That he did have a definite aversion?
Mrs. GIBSON. Yes.
Mr. JENNER. To Governor Connally as a person?
Mrs. GIBSON. Yes.
Mr. JENNER. And did he speak of that reasonably frequently in these discussions?
Mrs. GIBSON. No; not really, no. He didn't bring it up frequently.
Mr. JENNER. But he was definite and affirmative about it, was he?
Mrs. GIBSON. Yes; he didn't like him.

Moreover, Mrs. Gibson's testimony is flatly contradicted by her husband at the time, Mr. Gary Taylor. The following is his statement from vol.9, p.95:

Mr. JENNER. Did he ever mention the Kennedys or the Connallys?
Mr. TAYLOR. No.
Mr. JENNER. Did he ever mention the administration of either of them or their policies?
Mr. TAYLOR. Uh—no; I'm not even sure that Connally was in office at that time.
Mr. JENNER. Well, he was Secretary of the Navy.
Mr. TAYLOR. That's right. I was thinking of him as Governor.
I never heard Lee take exception to Government officials; take exception to Government policies—definitely—

I trust in the future you will be more careful in your selection of articles.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gerald Ginocchio

P.S. I am enclosing \$1 so that you can send a copy of this letter to Mr. Reston and his publisher.

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We, students of Interim Project #308: The Assassination of John F. Kennedy:
25 Years of Deceit, concur in the views expressed in this letter:

Wayne Hefrey

by W. D. Hefrey

Joe Don Woody

Shirley Hanner

David S. Brown

Bryce M. Brown

Vernon Cauthen

Faulkner Harlick

Biley Busendine

Mary Morton

A. L. Wells

The Assassination

shall employ all means to right this gross mistake or injustice to a boni-fied U.S. citizen and ex-serviceman." He asked Connally to "repair the damage done to me and my family."

Connally had resigned as Secretary of the Navy six weeks earlier. What the ex-serviceman got from the ex-Navy Secretary a month later was a stale promise to pass the problem on to his successor. Oswald had been spurned by a fellow Texan, and he resented it. He embroidered it into a personal antipathy. Connally came to take on enormous symbolic significance in Oswald's mind. Connally was the U.S. Government, and its unfair action fortified his bitterness against the U.S., and a man named Connally would become the repository of that bitterness.

Finally, in late May 1962, the Oswalds got out of Russia. They arrived in Fort Worth only a few weeks before Connally won the Democratic primary for the gubernatorial nomination. They had no money and a six-month-old baby. The husband had no qualifications for employment. Worse than that. The Fort Worth paper had reported the return of the turncoat.

The wife spoke no English, and her husband seemed determined to keep it that way. Their isolation and hopelessness might have been worse but for the small Russian émigré community in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, about 50 people who had gravitated to Texas mainly after World War II. They were anti-Communist.

The community had a titular leader, a kind and energetic gentleman in his late 50s named George Bouhe, who had fled Russia in 1923. Bouhe took an interest in the Oswalds and helped them get settled by providing them with a little cash here and there, \$10 or \$20. For his pains, he got only insults from Oswald. Bouhe persisted, mainly because Marina seemed to him a "lost soul." To Bouhe, Oswald was a simpleton and a boor and, soon enough, a wife abuser.

Lying about his Marine record worked at first. A month after his arrival, Oswald got his first job, at a Fort Worth welding company as a sheet-metal worker; on his application, he cited sheet-metal work in the Marine Corps as a qualification.

But Oswald was terrified of being found out. Bouhe had experienced Oswald's fixation with his military discharge and had seen how his lying about it launched him into a state of high anxiety. After the assassination, knowing that Oswald was tormented by the bad discharge at the very time when Connally was about to be promoted to the pinnacle of Texas government, Bouhe put the pieces together for the Warren Commission. "If anybody asked me, did Oswald have any hostility toward anybody in government, I would say Governor Connally."

The notion of Connally as the emotional spark for the assassination is strengthened by the testimony of others in the émigré community. In early October 1962, Oswald quit his job because he hated welding. Marina and the baby took up residence in the home of Alexandra De Mohrenschildt, the daughter of another Russian émigré in Dallas, a flamboyant loudmouth named George De Mohrenschildt, who loved with Oswald in uneven intellectual games. A year and a half later, Alexandra De Mohrenschildt came before the Warren Commission to talk about her acquaintance with Oswald.

"Was President Kennedy ever mentioned?" counsel asked. "Never, never," Alexandra replied. "It was the Governor of Texas who was mentioned mostly. For some reason, Lee just didn't like him. I don't know why, but he didn't like him."

Did Connally come up in connection with something about Lee's discharge from the Marines? counsel prodded.

"Maybe it was the dishonorable discharge. All I know is that it was something he didn't talk about. And there was a reason why he did not like Connally, but he never ever said a word about Kennedy."

In October Oswald applied for a job in the photography department of a printing concern in Dallas called Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall. The subject of his military career came up. "The Marines," Oswald said brashly. "Oh, yes—yes," the employer said. "Honorably discharged, of course?" "Oh, yes," Oswald replied with technical truthfulness. Oswald was once again seized with rage. Was this going to come up every time? His anxiety that his lies might be found out was intense.

Oswald used the Jaggars facilities after hours to forge a new Marine Corps discharge and draft a classification document in the name of Aleck James Hidell, the name under which he ordered his first weapon, a

Smith & Wesson pistol, by mail, and his second, a high-powered Italian Mannlicher Carcano rifle.

In early April, six months after arriving at Jaggars, Oswald brought his dismissal upon himself by flaunting a Soviet publication at work. He could say that he was fired for political reasons rather than for his own shortcomings, including inefficiency and quarreling with employees.

TAKING AIM

Three days into his first week of unemployment, April 10, Oswald made an attempt on the life of former General Edwin Walker, an ultraconservative and a onetime candidate for

Governor of Texas against John Connally. Oswald missed Walker's head by about an inch. In choosing Walker as a target, Oswald's murderous instinct was turning upon the figure of the pure right. His frustration had now taken its full form of violence. Coiled spring that he was, it was a question of what event, what figure, what farfetched fantasy might set him off.

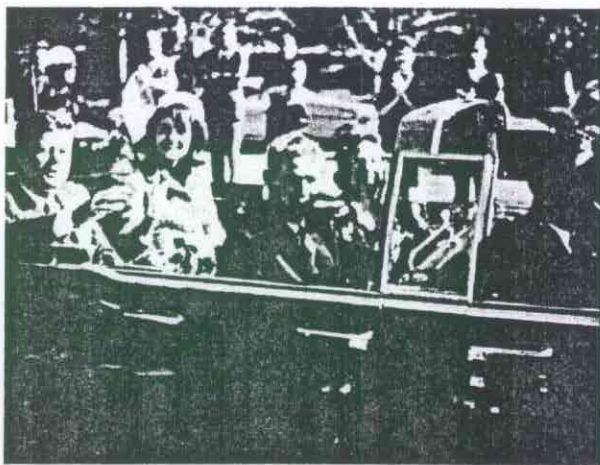
Only one person knew about the attempt on General Walker and how dangerous Oswald had become: Marina Oswald. When her husband confided his awful secret to her, she understood his capability to kill for political reasons and was horrified. She, above anyone else, appreciated his murderous instinct.

On Sunday, April 21, the headline in the Dallas *Morning News* read NIXON CALLS FOR DECISION TO FORCE REDS OUT OF CUBA. It reported a lashing speech that former Vice President Richard Nixon had made in Washington excoriating Kennedy for being "defensive" of Fidel Castro. Oswald withdrew into an adjacent room. When he re-emerged, he was dressed in a tie and white shirt. His pistol was shoved into his best gray pants.

"Where are you going?" Marina demanded, sensing danger.

"Nixon is coming to town. I want to go have a look."

"I know what your 'looks' mean," she said. She pleaded with him not to go and at last he agreed. Actually, Nixon was not in town at all and Oswald knew it. He had said "Nixon" because it



FROM BEHIND, THE TARGET COULD HAVE BEEN KENNEDY OR CONNALLY